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**To:** Each Supervisor

**From:** Michael J. Henrichs  
Director of Personnel

This is to provide your Board a status of departmental reviews and efforts on workforce/succession planning for mid-level and senior management positions. In February 2006, appointed department heads' MAPP goals were amended to include succession planning (i.e., workforce planning) to mitigate the effects of potential retirements on key mid-level and senior management classifications. The Department of Human Resources (DHR) developed the Strategic Workforce/Succession Planning (SWP) program to assist departments in achieving this goal and to ensure a standard, rigorous approach to successfully accomplish this task. This report provides the status of this endeavor.

The SWP program was developed to address the Countywide Strategic Plan Goal of Workforce Excellence. To carry out this goal, classifications with high levels of anticipated retirements were identified and strategies created to recruit, develop, and retain dedicated and productive employees in order to maintain services. The SWP program provided departments the opportunity to strategically assess departmental priorities, structure, workload, and workforce within the framework of anticipated retirements.

Departments were requested to submit their *Strategic Workforce Planning Forms* by June 30, 2006 to DHR. These forms document each department's key mid-level and senior management classifications and intended workforce plans. DHR conducted a preliminary review of all submissions and reports the following:

- All appointed department heads submitted their *Strategic Workforce Planning Forms*.
- Departments identified 169 key mid-level and senior management classifications with a high potential to be impacted by future retirements.



- Departments identified 60 classifications for which recruitment, development, and/or retention strategies will be implemented.
- The primary reasons reported by departments for not developing recruitment, development, and/or retention strategies for the remaining identified *key* mid-level and senior management classifications were:
  1. an adequate number of qualified County employees are prepared to assume the classification's responsibilities;
  2. the external labor market offers an adequate number of qualified individuals interested in this classification; and/or
  3. an effective recruitment and/or development program is already in place.

Further review of the documents submitted by departments indicates that nearly all departments understood the workforce planning process and made appropriate decisions regarding their respective workforce. The following overall trends were found:

1. ***The Administrative and Information Systems series of classifications (including Administrative Services Manager, Administrative Assistant, Staff Assistant, and Information Systems), in particular, will be impacted by future retirements.*** While some departments indicated that internal countywide recruitment will mitigate the effect of retirements in these classifications, many other departments could face shortages, thus reducing the effectiveness of recruiting from within promotional ranks. DHR will be working with departments to develop recruitment strategies and opening these positions for filing both internally in the County and to the public.
2. ***Many departments indicated use of the Learning Academy as a strategy for employee development.*** DHR will continue to review the courses offered by the Learning Academy and explore means to support increased enrollment in specific courses for which departments indicated particular interest. Additionally, we will work with departments to identify other resources that departments may use to direct employees to external development opportunities offered online and at local colleges and universities (e.g., certificate programs and extended education courses).
3. ***Many departments indicated use of exit interviews as a strategy for employee retention.*** Exit interviews enhance an organization's ability to retain quality employees because employees who decide to leave the organization can provide information on the organizational areas that need improvement. DHR developed a provisional exit interview survey that departments can use to gather information from exiting employees. We are currently conducting research to identify a comprehensive exit interview system.



4. ***Use of individual development plans as a strategy for employee development.***  
Individual development plans outline the steps that employees will take in order to achieve developmental goals and obtain the job experiences and competencies needed for positions of greater responsibility. These plans are developed in cooperation with the employee and his or her supervisor who work together to identify appropriate goals and determine the best course of action to meet them.

#### **Next Steps**

DHR is preparing an individual report for each department providing feedback and evaluation of the department's submission of their workforce planning plan. DHR staff will meet with each of the departments and work collaboratively with line staff to ensure that efficient and effective workforce strategies are executed to meet stated goals. Additionally, DHR has undertaken the following activities:

- ***Collecting workforce data from CWTAPPS to provide regular employee turnover reports to departments.***
- ***Researching, providing information, and facilitating the use of innovative Internet recruitment resources available to departments.***
- ***Developing a Job Advertisement Guide to provide information on creating effective employment advertisements.*** In the competitive job market, it is imperative that recruitment advertisements encourage the perception of the County as an employer of choice and attract dedicated, qualified individuals to seek County employment. This guide will provide County recruiters information on the process of developing effective recruitment advertisements; a framework for developing advertisements in selected media; and general resources for placement of recruitment advertisements in various media.
- ***Enhancing the test preparation resources available to individuals seeking employment or promotion with the County.*** The employment test study guides developed by DHR and available for use on our website have been well-received by candidates and have been linked to improved performance on exams. DHR will be developing several Information Guides (e.g., Effective Employment Interviewing, Data Collection, Statistics, Mechanical Aptitude) to supplement these guides and further serve the needs of test-takers.
- ***Creating a Hiring Interview Guide to provide line managers information on performing this critical task.*** While the examination process helps to identify the candidates who have the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the tasks of a classification, the final hiring or selection interview, however, is intended to identify which of the top candidates can perform the tasks in the specific work environment (e.g., department/work unit culture) where a vacancy exists. This guide will present considerations, practices, and guidelines for line managers in conducting this type of interview.

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- ***Maintaining regular electronic communication with the departmental workforce planning workgroup to share ideas and information.***

**Summary**

As depicted in the attached graph which displays the projected percent of employees retiring over the next 10 years, 9% of the overall County workforce will retire in the next five years, 11.5% in 6-10 years, and approximately 20% in the next 10 years. However, the projections for the executive management positions show a higher-level of turnover due to retirement, with more than 30% projected to retire in the next five years and 50% expected to retire in the next ten years.

The exodus of these valued and knowledgeable employees could have a dramatic impact on the County's operations if planning efforts and actions are not implemented to mitigate potential negative outcomes. The inclusion of workforce/succession planning as a MAPP goal facilitated by the Strategic Workforce/Succession Planning program is a step toward overcoming this challenge and ensuring the County's continued ability *to enrich lives through effective and caring services.*

DHR is committed to assisting departments in their workforce/succession planning efforts and in enhancing the SWP program to address the needs of a changing County workforce.

If you have any questions, please contact me or your staff may contact Susan Toy Stern, Chief Deputy Director, at (213) 974-2631.

MJH:STS  
NA:ach

Attachment

c: Department Heads

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# Employee Retention by All County Employees and Key Levels

